

Highlights of the School Library 3-Hour Field Experience for St. John Fisher Pre-Service Teachers

- I. The program began in 2010 and in 2011 was awarded the 2011 ACRL President's Program Innovation Award. Pages 2 and 3 of this document contain the text from the 2011 ACRL archives that describes the program.
- II. The school library field experience is a formal part of the written syllabi of two required courses. One course is taken by all adolescent pre-service teachers; the other by all elementary pre-service teachers.
- III. The college's Education Librarian personally finds placements for all pre-service teachers every semester. This is an easy task since school librarians clearly see the value of educating future classroom teachers as to the benefits of working with the school librarian and using the resources of the school library. Once the Education Librarian has secured enough placements, she sends the list to the college's School of Education's Director of Student Teaching who pairs pre-service teachers with school librarians.
- IV. To prepare the pre-service teachers for their 3-hour visit, the Education Librarian spends an hour discussing how to make the best use of the time spent with the school librarian. Expectations are clearly articulated to students, i.e. email is preferred method of contact to arrange the date and time of the 3 hour visit; arrange the visit asap, professional dress and demeanor are critical, review the school library's website beforehand, arrive prepared with questions, be flexible in how your time is spent, enjoy yourself, and say thank you!
- V. Upon completion of the 3 hour field experience, each pre-service teacher writes a one to two page reflection about the experience. This reflection becomes a part of the pre-service teacher's course portfolio. Additionally, each pre-service teacher sends a copy of his or her reflection to the Education Librarian.
- VI. The reflections are a joy to read. Again and again pre-service teachers express surprise and amazement regarding the ways in which a school librarian can enrich the educational experience. Comments are also plentiful regarding the competencies and teaching skills of school librarians. Many pre-service teachers do not know that school librarians hold teaching certification. A few comments occur each year expressing the desire to investigate the master's degree in school librarianship.
- VII. The program continues to thrive. This year the Education Librarian hopes to qualitatively analyze the reflections of the pre-service teachers and share the findings in various venues.

Submitted by

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3-Hour School Library Field Experience for Pre-Service K-12 Teachers

Posted on May 10, 2011 by Kerry Creelman

<http://acrl.ala.org/2011presprogram/?p=25>

Institution: Lavery Library at St. John Fisher College

Recognizing how essential collaboration between the K-12 classroom teacher and the school librarian is in promoting information literacy, the team worked together to form a three way partnership that included the college's Lavery Library, the college's School of Education, and approximately 100 school librarians in Upstate New York near the college's campus. The Education Librarian team member contacted school librarians of surrounding K-12 school districts and asked for their participation; response by the school librarians was enthusiastic.

The team then created a requirement for every K-12 pre-service teacher enrolled at St. John Fisher College to spend 3 hours of field experience in a school library. The three hours field experience in elementary libraries is imbedded into course EDUC356: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment in Literacy. For secondary education pre-service teachers, the three hours are imbedded into EDUC 418: Literacy Instruction for Middle-Childhood and Adolescent Learners.

Professors teaching those courses were included in all team discussions and readily agreed to prepare students for their school library field experience by communicating to students their expectations regarding connections each student should make between course assignments, school library resources, and information literacy.

The process itself is simple. Undergraduates and K-12 school librarians are paired by the College's Director of Student Teaching. Soon after each semester starts, the undergraduate introduces him or herself to the school librarian via email and they find a mutually agreeable date and time for the undergraduate to spend three hours in the school library with the school librarian.

The student carries paperwork with him or her for the school librarian to sign as verification that the 3 hours field experience has been completed. The completed paperwork is returned to the college's Director of Student Teaching. During the three hours, the undergraduate can observe how the school librarian collaborates with the classroom teachers in the school. The

undergraduate can asks questions like:

If I was a classroom teacher in your school, how would you and I collaborate?

How could I use the library resources when planning my lessons?

What are some examples of ways you currently work with classroom teachers?

What should a classroom teacher do to make the most of the school library librarian?

The thinking behind this project is that newly hired K-12 teachers are often so busy they never connect with the school librarian. However, if their undergraduate teacher preparation allows them to experience the value of classroom teacher/school librarian collaboration, they enter their profession seeking out the school librarian because they realize from the very beginning that the school librarian is a value-added piece of their students' educational experience.

Project Type: Completed Project

Budget: N/A

Team Members:

Kathleen Sigler, Education Librarian, St. John Fisher College

Melissa Jadlos, Library Director, St. John Fisher College

Dr. Wendy Paterson, Dean of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education

Allison Bosworth, School Of Education Director of Field Experience and Student Teaching

Other team members were the approximately 100 K-12 School library Media Specialists who participated